

**Amendments to the Claims:**

1-73. (Canceled)

74. (Newly Added) A method for predictively responding to a network management data request, the method comprising:

determining if said network management data request contains a pattern defined in a memory;

determining if said network management data request is contained in a cache of prefetched network management data requests if said network management data request contains a pattern defined in said memory;

sending a response based on said cached prefetched network management data request if said network management data request is contained in said cache of prefetched network management data requests and if said network management data request contains a pattern defined in said memory; and

initiating periodic data collections for said pattern if said network management data request is not contained in said cache of prefetched network management data requests but said network management data request contains a pattern defined in said memory.

75. (Newly Added) The method of claim 74, further comprising:

transmitting said network management data request to a network management data core to respond to said network management data request if said network management data request does not contain a pattern defined in said memory.

76. (Newly Added) The method of claim 74, wherein said pattern comprises a community string.

77. (Newly Added) The method of claim 76, wherein said pattern further comprises a periodicity of bursts for network management data requests containing said pattern.

78. (Newly Added) The method of claim 77, wherein said initiating includes initiating periodic data collections at a rate matching said periodicity of bursts for network management data requests containing said pattern.

79. (Newly Added) The method of claim 74, wherein said network management data request is a Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) request.

80. (Newly Added) The method of claim 74, wherein said pattern comprises a network management system IP address.

81. (Newly Added) The method of claim 74, wherein said pattern comprises a network management system port number.

82. (Newly Added) An apparatus for predictively responding to a network management data request, the apparatus comprising:

a request classifier configured to determine if said network management data request contains a pattern defined in a memory and further configured to determine if said network

management data request is contained in a cache of prefetched network management data requests if said network management data request contains a pattern defined in said memory;

a sender coupled to said request classifier configured to send a response based on said cached prefetched network management data request if said network management data request is contained in said cache of prefetched network management data requests and if said network management data request contains a pattern defined in said memory; and

a lookahead processor coupled to said request classifier configured to initiate periodic data collections for said pattern if said network management data request is not contained in said cache of prefetched network management data requests but said network management data request contains a pattern defined in said memory.

83. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 82, further comprising:

an interfacier coupled to said request classifier configured to transmit said network management data request to a network management data core to respond to said network management data request if said network management data request does not contain a pattern defined in said memory.

84. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 82, wherein said pattern comprises a community string.

85. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 84, wherein said pattern further comprises a periodicity of bursts for network management data requests containing said pattern.

86. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 85, wherein said lookahead processor is further configured to initiate periodic data collections at a rate matching said periodicity of bursts for network management data requests containing said pattern.

87. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 82, wherein said network management data request is a Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) request.

88. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 82, wherein said pattern comprises a network management system IP address.

89. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 82, wherein said pattern comprises a network management system port number.

90. (Newly Added) An apparatus for predictively responding to a network management data request, the apparatus comprising:

means for determining if said network management data request contains a pattern defined in a memory;

means for determining if said network management data request is contained in a cache of prefetched network management data requests if said network management data request contains a pattern defined in said memory;

means for sending a response based on said cached prefetched network management data request if said network management data request is contained in said cache of prefetched network

management data requests and if said network management data request contains a pattern defined in said memory; and

means for initiating periodic data collections for said pattern if said network management data request is not contained in said cache of prefetched network management data requests but said network management data request contains a pattern defined in said memory.

91. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 90, further comprising:

means for transmitting said network management data request to a network management data core to respond to said network management data request if said network management data request does not contain a pattern defined in said memory.

92. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 90, wherein said pattern comprises a community string.

93. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 92, wherein said pattern further comprises a periodicity of bursts for network management data requests containing said pattern.

94. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 93, wherein said means for initiating includes means for initiating periodic data collections at a rate matching said periodicity of bursts for network management data requests containing said pattern.

95. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 90, wherein said network management data request is a Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) request.

96. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 90, wherein said pattern comprises a network management system IP address.

97. (Newly Added) The apparatus of claim 90, wherein said pattern comprises a network management system port number.

98. (Newly Added) A program storage device, readable by a machine, embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method for predictively responding to a network management data request, the method comprising:

determining if said network management data request contains a pattern defined in a memory;

determining if said network management data request is contained in a cache of prefetched network management data requests if said network management data request contains a pattern defined in said memory;

sending a response based on said cached prefetched network management data request if said network management data request is contained in said cache of prefetched network management data requests and if said network management data request contains a pattern defined in said memory; and

initiating periodic data collections for said pattern if said network management data request is not contained in said cache of prefetched network management data requests but said network management data request contains a pattern defined in said memory.

99. (Newly Added) The program storage device of claim 98, wherein the method further comprises:

transmitting said network management data request to a network management data core to respond to said network management data request if said network management data request does not contain a pattern defined in said memory.

100. (Newly Added) The program storage device of claim 98, wherein said pattern comprises a community string.

101. (Newly Added) The program storage device of claim 98, wherein said pattern further comprises a periodicity of bursts for network management data requests containing said pattern.

102. (Newly Added) The program storage device of claim 101, wherein said initiating includes initiating periodic data collections at a rate matching said periodicity of bursts for network management data requests containing said pattern.

103. (Newly Added) The program storage device of claim 98, wherein said network management data request is a Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) request.

104. (Newly Added) The program storage device of claim 98, wherein said pattern comprises a network management system IP address.

105. (Newly Added) The program storage device of claim 98, wherein said pattern comprises a network management system port number.